

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (PREVIOUSLY AMENDED) A mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film, which mechanism is used in a film forming apparatus, comprising:
 - a stage for receiving a substrate which has been transported into the film forming apparatus to form a film on the substrate;
 - a shaft member for angularly displacing the stage, that is bearing the substrate, from a substrate receiving position at which the stage received the substrate, to a film forming position at which a substrate bearing surface of the stage is vertical or substantially vertical;
 - a plurality of support members which are provided so as to protrude from the substrate bearing surface of the stage; ~~and being arranged thereon so as to~~
wherein said plurality of support members are arranged so as to consist essentially of one group of support members that extend only along one side of the substrate bearing surface of the stage and so said plurality of support members of said one group of support members support only one end surface of the substrate when the stage is angularly displaced to the film forming position, where said one end surface is the surface of the substrate which faces downwards when the stage is angularly displaced to the film forming position; and
 - moving means, operably coupled to the support members of said one group of

support members, for moving the support members relative to the substrate bearing surface.

2. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) A mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film, which mechanism is used in a film forming apparatus, comprising:

a stage for receiving a substrate which has been transported into the film forming apparatus to form a film on the substrate;

a shaft member for angularly displacing the stage, that is bearing the substrate, from a substrate receiving position at which the stage received the substrate, to a film forming position at which a substrate bearing surface of the stage is vertical or substantially vertical;

a plurality of support members which are provided so as to protrude from the substrate bearing surface of the stage; ~~and being arranged so as to~~

wherein said plurality of support members are arranged so as to consist essentially of one group of support members that extend only along one side of the substrate bearing surface of the stage and so said plurality of support members of said one group of support members support only one end surface of the substrate when the stage is angularly displaced to the film forming position, where said one end surface is the surface of the substrate which faces downwards, when the stage is angularly displaced to the film forming position;

moving means, operably coupled to the support members of said one group of support members, for moving the support members relative to the substrate bearing

surface; and

wherein the moving means causes the each of the plurality of support members to move in parallel in one direction of three dimensional directions on the stage or causes each of the plurality of the support members to rotationally move on the stage about a longitudinal axis of each support member.

3. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 1, wherein the moving means moves the each of the plurality of support members of said one group of support members towards or away from the shaft member.

4. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 1, wherein the moving means is connected together with a plurality of the support members of said one group of support members and moves the plurality of support members in one operation.

5. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of moving means, wherein a the plurality of the moving means are provided to respectively connect with are operably coupled to the plurality of support members of said one group of support members such that each of said to move the plurality of support members is moved independently.

6. (ORIGINAL) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 1, wherein the moving means is an actuator.

7. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 1, wherein said each of the plurality of support members of said one group of support members is formed in a columnar shape.

8. (ORIGINAL) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 1, wherein the substrate is a glass substrate or a semiconductor wafer.

9. (WITHDRAWN) A method for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film, which method is used in a film forming apparatus, comprising the steps of:

placing a substrate to be coated with a film, which substrate has been transported into the film forming apparatus, on a stage movably provided with a plurality of support members;

angularly displacing the stage on which the substrate is placed, from a substrate receiving position at which the substrate has been received by the stage, to a film forming position at which a substrate bearing surface of the stage is vertical or substantially vertical and at which an end surface of the substrate is supported from thereunder by the support members;

angularly displacing the stage from the film forming position back to the substrate receiving position, after film formation;

moving the support members after the stage has returned to the film placing position; and

transporting the substrate to be coated with a film, out of the stage of the film forming apparatus, after the movement of the support members.

10. (WITHDRAWN) The method for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 9, wherein in the step of moving the support members, the support members are moved in parallel to one direction of three dimensional directions on the stage or are rotationally moved on the stage.

11. (WITHDRAWN) The method for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 9, wherein in the step of moving the support members, the support members are moved in a direction towards or away from the shaft member for angularly displacing the stage.

12. (WITHDRAWN) The method for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 9, wherein the substrate is a glass substrate or a semiconductor wafer.

13. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with the film of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of support members of said one group of support members has a long longitudinal axis that extends from the substrate bearing surface and wherein the moving means is configured and arranged so

as to cause ~~the each of the plurality of support members of said one group of support~~
members to move in one direction with respect to a plane in which lies the long
~~longitudinal axis of each of the support members of said one group of support members.~~

14. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with the film of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of support members of said one group of support members has a long-longitudinal axis that extends from the substrate bearing surface and wherein the moving means is configured and arranged so as to cause ~~each of the support members of said one group of support members~~ to move in a direction generally perpendicular to a plane in which lies the long-longitudinal axis of each of the support members of said one group of support members.

15. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with the film of claim 1, wherein the moving means is configured and arranged so as to cause ~~the each of the support members of said one group of support members~~ to move in a direction generally perpendicular to the substrate end surface.

16. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with the film of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of support members of said one group of support members has a long-longitudinal axis that extends from the substrate bearing surface and wherein the moving means is configured and ~~arranged~~ ~~arrange~~ so as to cause each of the support members of said one group of support

~~members to rotate about the long longitudinal axis of each support member of said one group of support members.~~

17. (PRESENTLY AMENDED) A mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with the film, which mechanism is used in a film forming apparatus, comprising:

a stage for receiving a substrate which has been transported into the film forming apparatus to form a film on the substrate;

a shaft member for angularly displacing the stage, that is bearing the substrate, from a substrate receiving position at which the stage received the substrate, to a film forming position at which a substrate bearing surface of the stage is vertical or substantially vertical;

a plurality of support members which are provided so as to protrude from the substrate bearing surface of the stage; ~~and to~~

~~wherein said plurality of support members are arranged so as to consist essentially of one group of support members that extend only along one side of the substrate bearing surface of the stage and so said plurality of support members of said one group of support members support only one end surface of the substrate when the stage is angularly displaced to the film forming position, where said one end surface is the surface which faces downwards when the stage is angularly displaced to the film forming position, each of the plurality of support members of said one group of support members having a long longitudinal axis that extends from the substrate bearing surface;~~

moving means, operably coupled to the support members of said one group of support members; for moving the support members relative to the substrate bearing support surface; and

wherein the moving means is configured and arranged so as to cause the each of the support members of said one group of support members to one of:

(a) move in one direction with respect to the long-longitudinal axis of each support member,

(b) move in a direction generally perpendicular to the long-longitudinal axis of each support member,

(c) move in a direction generally perpendicular to the substrate end surface, or

(d) rotate about the long-longitudinal axis of each support member.

18. (NEW) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 1, wherein the said plurality of support members of said one group of support members are further arranged so as to also complement a shape of an end of the substrate, the end that corresponds to said one end surface of the substrate.

19. (NEW) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 2, wherein the said plurality of support members of said one group of support members are further arranged so as to also complement a shape of an end of the substrate, the end that corresponds to said one end surface of the substrate.

20. (NEW) The mechanism for supporting a substrate to be coated with a film of claim 17, wherein the said plurality of support members of said one group of support members are further arranged so as to also complement a shape of an end of the substrate, the end that corresponds to said one end surface of the substrate.